



BOARD MEETING MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: July 25, 2026
To: Board of Directors
From: Jennie Short, General Manager
Subject: Presentation by County Supervisor Madrone on Possible Trail development and culvert repairs adjacent to BLCSD's infrastructure

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Steve Madrone reached out to me to schedule an onsite meeting with the BLCSD neighborhood. He would like to discuss his concept for rehabilitating the "trail" from the south end of Roundhouse Creek Road towards Su Meg. The majority of the property south of the subdivision is owned by the State as part of SuMeg Park. Many of residents attended the previous meeting at C Street when he reached out to the Big Lagoon Park Company about moving the northerly portion of the trail away from the eroding bluff.

We will meet at the southerly terminus of Roundhouse Creek Road, basically in front of Larry's house @ 466 Roundhouse Creek Road. Mr. Madrone previously provided some very basic documents; they are attached to for your convenience. I asked him and Tom Mattsen several times to provide actual schematics of their proposal, showing the existing trail right-of-way, the planned locations for culvert replacement, user parking areas, the destination, etc. This sketch is what he provided. The roads in the subdivision are owned by the County along with several lots on the bluff side of Oceanview. The right of way for these roads is mapped, but the easement section that goes into Big Lagoon Park Company is not as easy to distinguish. The subdivision map is attached for your reference.

He also stated the following regarding this meeting:

"Purpose: to discuss possible improvements to the trail including treating the eroding two stream/culvert sites and placing foot bridges by State Parks; could include no parking restrictions at south end of road.

Issues: Likely outcome of closing/fencing off trail if nothing is done to protect the public and parks from liabilities;

Affects on property values and other neighborhood concerns

Example of Hammond Trail development and concerns

Nothing will be done to improve the trail without further community outreach and planning and permitting. The trail is on state park property."

To follow is the list of concerns brought forward to BLCSD staff so far.

BLCSD Community Concerns Compiled by Staff

1. Identify and protect BLCSD infrastructure

2. Public safety for bikes, pedestrians, cars
3. Parking
4. Illegal camping
 - only 3 hike/bike sites at county campground / no reservations / no advanced signage notifying full campground
 - signage was installed at Big Lagoon School due to illegal camping (human waste / trash/ drug paraphernalia/ condoms)
 - illegal campsites between 101 and end of Roundhouse Creek
5. Dogs off leashes
6. Trash
7. Bathroom facilities
8. Security / Enforcement
9. Liability

Additional concerns brought forward by neighborhood members:

I realize this is very preliminary and in no way a detailed proposal. I also realize that the part the County plays in any overall plan to ultimately link Su Meg State Park by bike path/hiking path to Big Lagoon County Park is pretty much limited to roadways and easements. The State Parks system has control over any changes it makes within its boundaries, the majority of the area covered. With that in mind, I am not opposed to "improving" the two deteriorated culvert areas at the north end of Ocean View and south end of Roundhouse Creek Rd. They are dangerous to anyone trying to access the pathways they lie on and are certainly a liability for the County, not to mention having an increasingly damaging environmental impact on the bluffs they run through. How they are "improved" however is not clear in Supervisor Madrone's preliminary information. There are bridges and there are bridges - a narrow two-person wide passage vs. a 10 foot wide vehicle capable structure requiring huge disruption to the surrounding environment. The former I could support; the latter I could not. I am sure any structure would have to meet myriad state and county regulations which would then determine the ultimate structure. I expect any State Parks plan for what they intend to accomplish with a bike/pedestrian path through Su Meg would ultimately determine the size of any bridge structure. I would like to know a lot more about those plans. An awful lot of unknowns.

It does seem that some type of remediation is soon going to be required in those two areas for the safety of the public. It seems we are about at the end of path-users' self-made path detours, as we are running out of walkable detour land in both areas. A "simple" culvert replacement with a stable walkover would be my preferred option, if doable. I would strongly oppose any proposal which, by its nature, would bring increases in foot, bicycle, or vehicle traffic. Those of us who bought homes in this area did so, at least in part, because of its fairly isolated and traffic-free, double dead end street nature. My wife and I did so 32 years ago. This very isolation has helped promote and support a keen sense of community and self-reliance among the neighbors who share the beauty of this very special piece of the Humboldt coast. Please help us preserve our safe and cohesive neighborhood, and not promote any plan to use it as a conduit for through traffic of any kind.

I would add the trash/wires left by PG&E on the trail at two locations (at least) that I am aware of. I have pictures of the section at the north end.

Notification to the neighborhood, when possible, of when Wright's Tree Service is legitimately cutting in that area.

We are deeply concerned about this trail prospect for all of the nine reasons you listed, as well as additional concerns. Such a proposal would completely change this peaceful neighborhood

of mostly elderly, retired people. It would change the very nature of the neighborhood and why we chose to build our house here in 1978.. The beauty of this neighborhood would change. What would be the point and or necessity for such a trail when it's perfectly easy to go to Su Meg Park and or go to Big Lagoon Park? Security would be a BIG issue. people , curiosity seekers, transients, unnecessary and invasive.

So, enough already tonight, but so what about the failing culvert! Why do we have to turn the location into a tourist attraction? Let's fix the failing culvert and we've solved the problem. No tourist attraction necessary!

Yes, I have seen these documents before, and found them to be so vague as to be totally meaningless when it comes to Madrone's plans for the south end of Roundhouse Creek Rd. Will be compiling a list of my concerns (as best I can without knowing the facts) and will send it to you within the next couple of days. Spoiler alert: it's going to be a rather long list.

Additional questions received to date regarding the southerly portion of the possible trail include:

1. Is the south-end Roundhouse Creek Rd trail proposal contingent upon the Big Lagoon Corporation's approval of your "easement exchange plan."
2. Can and will you please provide documentation that the stretch of road in front of 466 Roundhouse Creek is owned by the county? I was told by the previous owner that the road in front of my home was a private road and I would have to maintain it. I have done that for the past 26 years. Not once, in all that time has the county been out to manage the overgrowth.
3. Could the project concerning the new south end trail be downsized to just address/fix the erosion problem at the pipe culvert and provide a safe and easily accessible crossing?

If not, then:

4. A crucial question: Can you provide any assurances that work on the trail would not make erosion worse?
5. How did this project originate and who are the people "driving" it? Why is this such a top priority for you, personally? It feels like this project is being shoved down our throats.
6. How would the project be funded and what agencies/people would do the actual work?
7. How long would the work take?
8. Is this project about a "New Trail," or improvements to the existing trail or a combination of both? What would the trail look like? Would it be paved like the Hammond Trail?
9. What types of access would be allowed besides pedestrians and dogs: e-bikes? Horses? ATV's? etc.
10. How would violations of access be prevented and enforced?
11. What plans, if any, do you have for parking on our narrow road, and how would parking violations be dealt with?
12. For how long and at what intervals would the county be contracted to come out to Big Lagoon for road maintenance?

13. Do you realize that Big Lagoon could be either the ending point for the general public or the beginning point for people who don't want to pay Sue-Meg Park entry fees? Either way, has anyone considered the amount of traffic of all kinds that this trail could bring to our small community?
14. Would this "new trail" be advertised and/or promoted to the general public? If yes, that reinforces the possibility for Roundhouse Creek Rd being inundated by foot traffic, e-bike traffic, increased autos and truck/hauling vehicles for e-bikes, etc., that we are not equipped to handle.

ATTACHMENTS

Subdivision Map
Madrone Notes
Madrone Map